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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRAGUE 001007

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: CZECH RESPONSE ON UN REFORM

REF: A. STATE 111637

1B. PRAGUE 935

Classified By: Political Officer Kimberly C. Krhounek for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary. On June 20, PolCouns delivered ref A demarche on U.S. priorities for UN reform to Mr. Jan Kara, Director of the UN Department at the MFA. In addition, we referred Mr. Kara to the June 16 On-the-Record briefing on UN reform delivered by the Under Secretary and followed up with additional discussions on June 29. Kara noted the difficulty of reforming an international bureaucracy, but said that the GOCR agrees with the majority of positions outlined in the U.S. paper. Kara said that as an EU member, their final opinion would be shaped by the EU internal discussions on the various aspects of reform including the Convention on Terrorism and the creation of a Peace-Building Commission. The Czech Republic will co-sponsor the G-4 proposal on Security Council Reform and is happy with the proposed measures to strengthen human rights protection through creation of a Human Rights Council (ref B). The Czechs remain cautious on development proposals supported by the EU that would increase aid targets to 0.7 percent by 2015. End summary.

MANAGEMENT REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT

12. (C) We stressed that the U.S. is interested in reform of the UN as a whole, particularly in the management of the various organs and institutions. Kara noted wryly that the UN has been under reform processes for many years and that there are many areas with the potential for improvement. Unfortunately, it has proven difficult to implement many of the proposed reforms, as only some 10 to 20 percent of proposals offered (some of them recycled from earlier efforts) have ever materialized over the years. He added that achieving a minimum of our reform goals would be equivalent to a "big bang" for the UN, but may not be seen in Washington as sufficient. Kara agreed that reform should not stop with the September high-level event. Kara noted that as members of the EU, final positions on many of the issues in our paper were under internal discussion to find a common position, so some details may change in the official Czech stance between now and September.

13. (C) Kara said that the Czechs are very cautious on the development aspect of summit outcomes. They now consider themselves an "emerging donor" country, but are not ready to make the jump from committing 0.1 percent to 0.7 percent of GDP to development assistance by 2015, which is the UN goal. Kara noted that these targets were agreed to by the EU countries prior to the Czech Republic becoming a member in 2004, but said that even within the EU discussions, the member states were making a distinction between old and new member states in establishing development assistance target goals. Still, the Czechs would prefer not to have a clearly binding formula used to determine the amount of development assistance given.

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL AND COUNTER-TERRORISM

14. (C) To date, the Czechs have been quite happy with U.S. proposals to strengthen the human rights organs of the UN through creation of a Human Rights Council, although they differ with us on details of size and role (see ref b). The Czechs believe there should be formal criteria on eligibility to join the Council, as holding an election within the UN General Assembly would lead to some of the same problems the UNHCR has today. They also hope that creating the new Council will help eliminate some of the 100 repetitive resolutions that are passed every year.

15. (C) Adoption of a comprehensive Convention on Terrorism is also a priority for the EU, so the Czechs did not expect to have any problems supporting this U.S. priority. He noted that he was "surprised" not to find us to be too insistent on a specific definition of terrorism and said that our points on this issue were something they "can easily live with." Kara said that there was some hesitancy within the EU about the weight to give to the SYG's counter-terrorism strategy,

but to the Czechs, Annan's points are more a set of guiding principles than a comprehensive strategy.

SECURITY COUNCIL REFORM

15. (C) The Czechs are quite interested in Security Council reform and Kara observed that while the USG position is now public, he saw it as having a great deal of flexibility on final details. He asked whether the USG intended to campaign actively for our positions on this issue. He added that the Czechs plan to stick with their long-term position supporting expansion of the Security Council and that they specifically support Germany and Japan for seats as permanent members. They have decided that they will co-sponsor the G-4 proposal. Kara noted that under the proposal there would be a 15-year moratorium on use of the veto, which he called a "strange compromise" but one that would probably satisfy some concerns.

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